

music that was most popular; and when dinner was over their hostess led him to her piano, and he played and sang for them again and again. His voice was soft and sweet, and though it was untrained, he sang with expression and grace, playing with more skill but less feeling and effect than he sang. Music and books had been the solace of lonely years, and he could easily see that he had pleased them with his songs. He went home to the dreary rooming-out on Prairie avenue and laughed at the howling wind. The bare grimy walls and the dim kerosene lamp, even Sam's uncomplaining smile in the back room, sent no gloom to his soul. It had been a happy evening. It had cost him a hard struggle to restrain the emotion which he had felt at times; and when he withdrew, soon after the trumpets sounded tattoo, and the ladies fell to discussing him, as women will there was but one verdict—his manners were perfect.

But the colonel said more than that. He had found him far better read than any other officer of his age he had ever met; and they one and all expressed the hope that they might see him frequently. No wonder it was of momentous importance to him. It was the opening to a new life. It meant that here at least he had met soldiers and gentlemen and their fair and gracious wives who had welcomed him to their homes, and though they must have known that a pall of suspicion and crime had overshadowed his past, they believed either that he was innocent of the enormous charge or that his years of exile and suffering had amply atoned. It was a happy evening indeed to him; but there was gloom at Capt. Rayner's.

The captain himself had gone out soon after tattoo. He found that the parlor was filled with young visitors of both sexes, and he was in no mood for merriment. Miss Travers was being welcomed to the post in genuine army style, and was evidently enjoying it. Mrs. Rayner was sitting nervously in front of the parlor with a cloud upon her brow and for once in her life compelled to preserve temporary silence upon the subject upon her thoughts. She had been forbidden to speak of it to her husband; yet she knew he had gone out again with every probability of needing some one to talk to about the matter. She could not well brook the topic in the parlor because she was not at all sure how Capt. and Mrs. Gregg of the cavalry would take it; and they were still there. She was a loyal wife; her husband's quarrel was hers and more, too; and she was a woman of intuition even keener than that which so readily accord the sex. She knew, and knew well, that the hideous doubt had evening for a long time in her husband's heart of hearts, and she knew still better that it would crush him to believe it was even suspected by any one else. Right or wrong, the one thing for her to do, she doubted not, was to maintain the original guilt against all comers, and to lose no opportunity of feeding the flame that consumed Mr. Rayner's record and reputation. He was guilty—she must be guilty; and though she was a Christian according to her view of the case—a pillar of the church in matters of public charity and picturesque conformity to all the rules called for in the service, and much that it did not—she was unwilling in her condemnation of Mr. Rayner.

To those who pointed out that he had made every atonement, man could make she responded with the severity of conscious virtue that there could be no atonement without repentance and repentance without humility. Mr. Rayner's whole attitude was that of stubborn pride and resentment. His atonement was that conferred by the manumission of his contrabands, and even if it were so that he had more than made amends for his crime the rules that held good for ordinary sinners were not applicable to an officer of the army. He must be a man above suspicion, incapable of wrong or fraud, and once stained he was forever ineligible as a gentleman. It was a subject upon which she waxed declamatory too often, and the youngsters of her own regiment worried of it. As Mr. Foster once expressed it in speaking of the very case, "Mrs. Rayner can talk more charity and show less than any woman I know." So long as her talk was aimed against any lurking tendency of their own to look upon Rayner as a possible offender, it fell at times on ungrateful ears, and she was quick to see it and to choose her hearers but here was a new phase—one that might rouse the latent espartaco de corps of the Riflers—and she was bent on striking while the iron was hot. If anything would provoke unanimity of action and sentiment in the regiment, this public recognition by the cavalry, in their very presence, of the man they called a criminal was the thing of all others to do it, and she meant to head the revolt.

Possibly Gregg and his modest help-met discovered that there was something she desired to "spring" upon the meeting. The others present were all of the infantry; and when Capt. Rayner simply glanced in, spoke hurried good evening, and went as hurriedly out again, there was sure of it and marked his wife away. Then came Mrs. Rayner's opportunity.

"If it were not Capt. Rayner's house, I could not have been even called to Capt. Gregg. You heard what he said at the club this morning, I suppose?"

In one form or another, indeed, almost everybody had heard. The others were set upon maintaining an unendurable silence. Miss Travers looked reproachfully at her flushed sister, but to no purpose. At last one of the ladies remarked:

"Well, of course I heard of it, but I've heard so many different versions. It seems to have grown somewhat since morning."

"It sounds just like him, however," said Mrs. Rayner, "and I made inquiry before speaking of it. He said he meant to invite Mr. Hayne to his house to-morrow evening, and if the infantry didn't like it they could stay away."

"Well, now, Mrs. Rayner," protested Mr. Foster, "of course none of us heard what he said exactly, but it is my experience that no conversation was there-

peated without being exaggerated, and I've known old Gregg for ever so long, and never heard him say a sharp thing yet. Why, he's the mildest mannered fellow in the whole—th cavalry. He would never get into such a snarl as that would bring about him in five minutes."

"Well, he said he would do just as the colonel did, anyway—we have that straight from cavalry authority—and we all know what the colonel has done. He has chosen to honor Mr. Hayne in the presence of the officers who denounce him, and practically denies the opinion of the Riflers."

"But, Mrs. Rayner, I did not understand Gregg's remarks to be what you say, exactly. Blake told me that when asked by somebody whether he was going to call on Mr. Hayne, Gregg simply replied he didn't know—he would ask the colonel."

"Very well. That means he proposes to be guided by the colonel, or nothing at all; and Capt. Gregg is simply doing what the others will do. They say to us in so many words: 'We prefer the society of your bete noire to your own.' That's the way I look at it," said Mrs. Rayner, in deep excitement.

It was evident that, though none were prepared to endorse so extreme a view, there was a strong feeling that the colonel had put an affront upon the Riflers by his open welcome to Mr. Hayne. He had been exacting before, and had caused a good deal of growing among the women. They were ready to find fault, and here was strong provocation. Mr. Foster was a youth of unfortunate and unpopular propensities. He should have held his tongue instead of striving to stem the tide.

"I don't uphold Hayne any more than you do, Mrs. Rayner, but it seems to me this is a case where the colonel has to make some acknowledgment of Mr. Hayne's conduct."

"Very good. Let him write him a letter, then, thanking him in the name of the regiment, but don't pick him up like this in the face of ours," interrupted one of the juniors, who was seated near Miss Travers in a wise stroke of policy. Mrs. Rayner invited him to breakfast, and there was a clatter of approval.

"Well, hold on a moment," said Foster. "Hasn't the colonel had every one of us to dinner more or less frequently?"

"Admitted. But what's to do with it?"

"Hasn't he invariably invited each officer to dine with him in every case where an officer has arrived?"

"Granted. But what then?"

"If he broke the rule or precedent in Mr. Hayne's case, would he not, practically be saying that he endorsed the views of the court martial as opposed to those of the department commander, Gen. Sherman, the secretary of war, the president of the United States?"

"Oh, make out your transfer papers, Foster. You ought to be in the cavalry or some other disgruntled branch of the service," burst in Mr. Graham.

"I declare Mr. Foster, I never thought you would abandon your colors," said Mrs. Rayner.

"I haven't madam, and you've no right to say so," said Foster, indignantly. "I simply follow up any attempt to work up a regimental row out of this thing will make me infinitely worse, and I deprecate the whole business."

"I suppose you mean to intimate that Capt. Rayner's position and that of the regiment is bad—all wrong—that Mr. Hayne has been persecuted," said Mrs. Rayner, with trembling lips and cheeks aflame.

"Mrs. Rayner, you are unjust," said poor Foster. "I ought not to have undertaken to explain or defend the colonel's act, perhaps, but I am not disposed to my regiment or my colors, what I want is to prevent further trouble; and I know that anything like a concerted resentment of the colonel's invitation will lead to infinite harm."

"You may cringe and how and bear it if you choose; you may humble yourself to such a piece of insolence, but rest assured there are plenty of men and women in the Riflers who won't bear it. Mr. Foster, and for one I won't." She had risen to her full height now, and her eyes were blazing. "For his own sake I trust the colonel will omit our names from the next entertainment he gives, Nellie, shall I?"

"Oh, thank Mrs. Rayner," interrupted one of the ladies, "they must give her a dinner or a reception."

"Indeed they shall not! I refuse to enter the door of people who have insulted my husband as they have."

"Hush! Listen!" said Mr. Graham, springing toward the door.

There was wondering silence an instant.

It was nothing but the trumpet sounding tattoo," said Mrs. Rayner, hurriedly.

But even as she spoke they rose to their feet. Muffled cries were heard, borne in on the night wind—a shot, then another, down in the valley—the quick peal of the cavalry trumpet.

"Don't pass. It's fire!" shouted a voice from the doorway. "Come on!"

CHAPTER V.

A LITTLE GIRL KNEELING SOBBING AND TERRIFIED.

Down in the valley south of the post a broad glow was already showing upward and illuminating the sky. One among

a dozen little shanties and log houses, the homes of the landless of the garrison and collectively known as Sudsville, was a mass of flames. There was a rush of officers across the parade, and the men answering the alarm of the trumpet and the shots and shouts of the sentries, came tearing from their quarters and plunging down the hill. Among the first on the spot came the young men who were of the party at Capt. Rayner's, and Mr. Graham was ahead of them all. It was plain to the most inexperienced that there was hardly anything left to save in or about the burning shanty. All efforts must be directed towards preventing the spread of the flames to those adjoining. Half-clad women and children were rushing about, shrieking with fright and excitement, and a few men were engaged in dragging household goods and furniture from those tenements not yet reached by the flames. Fire apparatus seemed to be none, though squads of men speedily appeared with ladders, axes and buckets, brought from different company quarters, and the arriving fire engines quickly formed the bucket line, and water dipped from the icy creek began to flow from hand to hand. Before anything like this was fairly under way, a scene of semi-tragic, semi-comic intensity had been enacted in the presence of a rapidly gathering audience. "It was worth more than the price of admission," cried Blake, "to tell it afterwards," said the officers, later.

A tall, angular woman, frantic with excitement and terror, was dancing about in the broad glare of the burning hut, tearing her hair, making wild rushes at the flames from time to time as though intent on dragging out some prized object that was being consumed before her eyes, and all the time keeping up a volley of imprecations and abuse in boy's

Hispanic, apparently directed at a covering object who sat in limp helplessness upon a little heap of firewood, swaying from side to side, and moaning stupidly in which his face was hidden. His clothing was still smoking in places; his hair and beard were singed to the roots; he was evidently seriously injured, and the sympathizing soldiers who had gathered around him after deluging him with snow and water were striving to get him to arise and go with them to the hospital.

A little girl, not ten years old, knelt sobbing and terrified by his side. She, too, was scorched and singed, and the soldiers had thrown rough blankets about her; but it was for her father, not herself, she seemed worried to distraction. Some of the women were striving to reassure and comfort her in their homely fashion, fanning her cheek up—the father was only stupid from drink, and would be all right as soon as "the liquor was off him." But the little one was beyond consolation so long as he could not or would not speak in answer to her entreaties.

All this time, never pausing for breath, shrieking imprecations on her drunken spouse, reproaches on her frightened child, and imprecations to the blessed saints in heaven to reward the gentleman who had saved her hoarded money—a smoking packet that she juggled to her breast—Mrs. Rayner, the secretary of the company B, as she had long been called here, was prancing up and down through the gathering crowd, her shrill voice overmastering all other clamor.

The vigorous efforts of the men, directed by cool headed officers, soon beat back the flames that were threatening the neighboring shanties, and leveled to the ground what remained of Private Chancery's home. The fire was extinguished almost as rapidly as it began, but the current of Mrs. Rayner's eloquence was still unquenched. The aspirations of sympathetic sisters to "Howd yer whist," the authoritative admonition of some old sergeant to "Steer your infernal nose," and the half-maddened, yet appealing glances of her suffering child, were all insufficient to check her.

It was not until the quiet tones of the colonel were heard that she began to cool down: "We've had enough of this, Mrs. Rayner; be still, now, or we'll have to send you to the hospital in the cool cart." Mrs. Rayner knew that the colonel was a man of few words, and believed him to be one of less sentiment. She was afraid, and she concluded it time to come threats and abuse and come down to the more effective road of wronged and suffering womanhood—a feast which she accomplished with the consummate ease of long practice, for the rows in the Chancery household were matters of garrison notoriety. The surgeon, too, had come, and after quick examination of Chancery's condition, had directed his horse to be taken out to the hospital, and thither his little daughter had been following him, despite the efforts of some of the women to detain her and dress her properly.

Before returning to his quarters the colonel desired to know something of the origin of the fire. There was testimony enough and to spare. Every woman in Sudsville had a theory to expound, and he was eager to hear of it and to the exclusion of all others. It was not until he had summarily colored them to go to their homes and not come near him that the colonel managed to get a clear statement from some of the men.

Chancery had been away all the evening, drinking as usual, and Mrs. Chancery was searching about Sudsville for a drunkard, sympathizing listeners for him. Life, Graham, who knew her father's haunts, had guided him home and was striving to get him to his little sleeping corner before her mother's return, when in his drunken helplessness he fell against the table, overturning the kerosene lamp, and the curtains were all aflame in an instant. It was just after tattoo or so, and when Kate's shrieks aroused the inmates of Sudsville and started the cry of "Fire." The timely structure of pine boards burned like so much tinder, and the child and her stupefied father had been dragged forth only in time to save their lives. The little one, after giving the alarm, had rushed again into the house and was tugging at his senseless form when rescue came for both—now too soon.

As for Mrs. Chancery, at the first note of danger she had rushed screaming to the door:

"Come right in here, Mrs. Chancery. Now, quick, what is it?"

And from the dining room came the answer, hurried, half-whispered and mysterious:

"He's been drinking! ever since he got out of hospital, ma'am, and he's worse than ever about Lord'nant Hayne. It's mischief he'll be doin', ma'am; he's crazy like!"

"Mrs. Chancery, you must watch him. You—Hush!"

And here she stopped short, for, in astonishment at what she had already heard, and in her instant effort to hear no more of what was so evidently not intended for her, Mrs. Travers hurried from the parlor, the swish of her skirt telling loudly of her presence there. She went again to her room. What could it mean? Why was her proud, imperious Kate holding secret interviews with this coarse and vulgar woman? What concern was it of hers that Chancery should be "worse" about Mr. Hayne? It could not mean that the mischief he would do was mischief to the man who had saved his life and his property. That was out of the question. It could mean that the poor, broken down, drunken fellow had the means in his power of further harming a man who has already been made to suffer so much. Indeed, Kate's very exclamation, the very tone in which she spoke, showed a distrust of mind that arose from no fear for one whom she hated as she hated Hayne. Her anxiety was personal. It was for her husband and for herself she feared, or woman's tongue never yet revealed a secret.

Nellie Travers stood in her room stunned and bewildered, yet trying hard to recall and put together all that she had heard, and rumors that had reached her about the strange conduct of Chancery after he was taken to the hospital—especially about his heart-breaking wail when told that it was Kate, Hayne who had rescued him from his death, somewhere, somehow, this man was connected with the long-hidden truth in Hayne's trouble. Could it be possible that he did not realize it, and that her sister had discovered it? Could it be—oh, heaven! no!—could it be that Kate was standing between that lonely and friendless man and the revelation that would set him right? She could not believe it of her! She would not believe it of her sister! And yet what did Kate mean by charging Mrs. Chancery to watch him—that drunken husband? What could it mean but that she was striving to prevent Mr. Hayne's ever hearing the truth? She longed to learn more and solve the riddle once and for all.

They were still earnestly talking to gether down in the dining-room but she could not listen. Kate knew her so well that she had not closed the door leading into the hall, though both she and the landlady of Company B had lowered their voices. It was disgraceful at best, thought Miss Travers, it was beneath her sister that she should hold any private conversation with a woman of that class. Confidences with such were contamination. She had determined to rush down stairs and put an end to it, but was saved the scene; fresh young voices, heavy ringing tones, and the stamp of heavy boot heels were heard at the door; and as Rayner entered, ushering in Royce and Graham, Mrs. Rayner and the landlady fled once more to the kitchen.

When the sisters found themselves alone again, it was late in the evening. Mrs. Rayner came to Nellie's room and talked on various topics for some little time, watching narrowly her sister's face. The young girl hardly spoke at all. It was evident to her elder what her thoughts must be.

"I suppose you think I should explain Mrs. Chancery's agitation and mysterious conduct, Nellie," she finally and suddenly said.

"I do not want you to tell me anything, Kate, that you yourself do not wish to tell me. You understand, of course, how I happened to be there?"

"Oh, certainly. I was thinking of that. You couldn't help hearing; but you must have thought it queer—her being so agitated, I mean."

"Didn't you?"

"I wasn't thinking of her at all."

"What did you think then?" half defiantly, yet trembling and growing white.

"I thought it strange that you should be talking with her in such a way."

"She was worried about her husband—his drinking so much—and came to consult me."

"Why, should she—and you—show such consternation at his connection with the name of Mr. Hayne?"

"Nellie, that matter is one you know I cannot bear to talk of." ("Very recently only," thought the younger.) "You once asked me to tell you what Mr. Hayne's crime had been, and I answered that until you could hear the whole story you could not understand the matter at all. We are both worried about Chancery. He is not himself, he is wild and imaginative when he's drinking. He has some strange fancies since the fire, and he thinks he ought to do something to help the officer because he helped him, and his head is full of Police Gazette stories, utterly without foundation, and he thinks he can tell who the real culprits were, or something of that kind. It is after nonsense. I have investigated the whole thing—heard the whole story. It is the trashiest, most impossible thing you ever dreamed of, and would only make fearful trouble if Mr. Hayne got hold of it."

"Why?"

"Why? Because he is naturally vengeful and embittered, and he would seize on any pretext to make it unpleasant for the officers who brought about his trial."

"Do you mean that what Chancery says in any way affects them?" asked Nellie, with quickening pulse and color.

"It might, if there was a word of truth in it; but it is the madman's dream of a liquor-maddened brain. Mrs. Chancery and I both know that what he says is utterly impossible. Indeed, he tells no two stories alike."

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Sigs, Spits, Baldwins and Greenings,

LOST IN THE WOODS.

A TALE OF ONTARIO PIONEER LIFE.

WRITTEN FOR THE BRANDON SATURDAY NIGHT.

Our Manitoba settlers sometimes imagine that they have more trials and disappointments than generally fall to the lot of mankind. They may begin to think that fate is against them, and that their lot in life is hard. It is always by people of stout hearts and strong minds that new countries are developed. When the settlers of this province have fulfilled their mission, when pioneering days are over, and when they have gone to that new and where flows the river of peace and where the tears of grief from every eye, their true worth will be realized, and their praise will be sung by succeeding generations. The pioneers of Eastern Canada had difficulties to overcome and hardships to endure, which when compared with those of this country give an idea of the perseverance and the beautiful life of the pioneers. There the homes had to be built out of the forest and dark and winding trails had to be traversed over stumps and roots in order to reach civilization.

It was many years since the time when our story begins, and the beautiful city of Toronto could boast of nothing more than a few scattered houses, and very muddy streets, the country north and west being a dense forest. A little colony of about a dozen souls found their way west from here about thirty miles, and settled on the banks of the river, in the township of Esquimaux, where the pines were thick and tall. There were many advantages in settling in the forest, and the protection from storms and wind, with abundance of building material and fuel are amongst them. This little colony soon made themselves homes, and were as comfortable as it is possible to be when far from friends and in a strange land. They at once went to work to subdue the forest, and make a clearing, a slow process compared with early life on a western prairie. They had spent some eight or ten years of their life, and other settlers began to find their way to the district, so that friendships and acquaintances were formed, and the little colony became brighter and happier. Two of the settlers belonging to the little colony had now their own friends and three or four little children to their own home. One of the men, whose name was John, was a settler of the township of Esquimaux, where the pines were thick and tall. There were many advantages in settling in the forest, and the protection from storms and wind, with abundance of building material and fuel are amongst them. This little colony soon made themselves homes, and were as comfortable as it is possible to be when far from friends and in a strange land. They at once went to work to subdue the forest, and make a clearing, a slow process compared with early life on a western prairie. They had spent some eight or ten years of their life, and other settlers began to find their way to the district, so that friendships and acquaintances were formed, and the little colony became brighter and happier. Two of the settlers belonging to the little colony had now their own friends and three or four little children to their own home.

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He starts out, still hoping to find his father alive. He hurries forward, he shouts his name, he listens, but there is no sound but the echo of his own voice. All efforts are fruitless, and, and only by the party drop in at the end of the day, giving the mother no comfort, and weakening the hope on which she was leaning. The sun rose clear and bright, and other neighbors joined in the search party, using every means to find the little wanderer. But all seemed in vain, and the day wore on to evening when all, weary and sick at heart, began to gather to the house. When within a mile of the house, the father received new hope by seeing little footprints in the snow. He followed them, and what was his horror to see two large black bears sleeping beside a hollow log. The party were well armed, and it was only a few moments' work to destroy the stupid beasts, that were as yet not more than half awakened from their winter slumber. Could it be possible that the child had been devoured? The men hurried forward, and to their joy there they saw lying beside a little hillock, with her head resting on a piece of ice, the little wanderer. The heat of her cheek had melted the ice, and the cold of the night had fastened the little golden curls so that they required to be severed with a knife. Her eyes were closed and her cheeks were very pale, and none were left alone together to wait and to weep. The other children had gone to bed, and the clock ticked loud, but no word of reproach was ever spoken, and none were moved. It was glad tidings that startled them when the shout was heard "The boy has found her." One look told the poor mother that there was no hope, and with a piercing cry she sank to the floor and gave herself up to unrestrained grief. A loud sound in the long room behind the Presbyterian church at Landonhouse, Halton County, Ontario, still marks the spot where the little one was laid to rest, and on a moss-grown stone is the story briefly told. "Through fault of friends she went away and perished in a wilderness, when there was no way."

Years afterwards, beside the old open fireplace, the father often told the story to his grandchildren, and they in turn have told it to theirs. If our Manitoba settlers are made more thankful and contented for their many blessings in their western homes, while reading of the story of an Eastern pioneering family, we shall not have written in vain.

Morphine the Curer.
The czar of Russia has become such a confirmed slave to the habit of injecting morphine, that he is now said to inject daily from twelve to fifteen grains of this sedative drug. When it is remembered that the dose of morphine usually administered by a doctor to a patient in pain is only one grain, it will be seen that the craving has increased in the case of the Emperor Alexander. The czar has made many efforts to break himself off a habit which must end disastrously if persevered in, but the result of total abstinence from the use of the injection even for forty-eight hours, has been such a terrible state of nervous debility and depression that he has not been able to persist in his resolve.

To Consumptives.
There are several having been restored to health by the use of the celebrated Eberle's Lung Tonic and other Eberle's Lung Tonic. The children were all healthy, and the mother was able to do her household work, and all preparations possible in a new country were made to show the guests due honor, and give their daughter a good wedding. The children were all healthy, and the mother was able to do her household work, and all preparations possible in a new country were made to show the guests due honor, and give their daughter a good wedding. The children were all healthy, and the mother was able to do her household work, and all preparations possible in a new country were made to show the guests due honor, and give their daughter a good wedding.

Young Men, Read This.
The Volume Belt Co., of Marshall, Minn., offer to send their celebrated Eberle's Lung Tonic and other Eberle's Lung Tonic. The children were all healthy, and the mother was able to do her household work, and all preparations possible in a new country were made to show the guests due honor, and give their daughter a good wedding. The children were all healthy, and the mother was able to do her household work, and all preparations possible in a new country were made to show the guests due honor, and give their daughter a good wedding.

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For the West, daily, except Sunday, at 12:45 p.m.
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Brandon, Sept. 14, 1895.

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